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STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

At the 3927th meeting of the Security Council, held on 16 September 1998, in connection with the Council's consideration of the item entitled "The situation in Africa", the President of the Security Council made the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council welcomes the report of the Secretary-General of 13 April 1998 on 'The causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa', which was submitted to the Security Council (S/1998/318) and the General Assembly (A/52/871). It agrees with the Secretary-General that the credibility of the United Nations in Africa to a great extent depends upon the willingness of the international community to act and to explore new means of advancing the objectives of peace and security in the African continent.

"The Security Council, which has the primary responsibility under the Charter of the United Nations for international peace and security, expresses its commitment to exercising this responsibility in relation to Africa, and affirms that strengthening Africa's capacity to participate in all aspects of peacekeeping operations, including their military, police, humanitarian and other civilian components, is a key priority.

'The Security Council encourages increased bilateral and multilateral cooperation in the field of peacekeeping, especially capacity-building, between Member States, the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity (OAU) as well as subregional organizations in Africa. It welcomes the efforts already undertaken by the United Nations and Member States to promote greater transparency and coordination in multilateral efforts to enhance Africa's capacity for peacekeeping. In particular, it welcomes efforts to implement the recommendations in the report of the Secretary-General of 1 November 1995 on 'Improving preparedness for conflict prevention and peace-keeping in Africa' (S/1995/911) and to follow up the outcome of the meetings organized by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations in December 1997 and May 1998. It encourages all States and organizations concerned to work with African States in particular on the basis of African initiatives and proposals.

"The Security Council encourages contributions, financial and in kind, aimed at enhancing Africa's peacekeeping capacity. In particular, it urges Member States to contribute to the trust funds established by the United Nations and the OAU to improve preparedness for conflict prevention and peacekeeping in Africa.

"The Security Council affirms the role of the United Nations in setting general standards for peacekeeping, and urges compliance with existing United Nations guidelines, including through the use of the Ten Rules Code of Personal Conduct for Blue Helmets, which were elaborated following a request by the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations (A/51/230). It encourages all those involved in enhancing Africa's peacekeeping capacity to ensure that training for and the conduct of peacekeeping give due emphasis to international humanitarian law and human rights, including the rights of the child, as well as to gender issues. It requests all those conducting peacekeeping operations in Africa to pay particular attention to the situation of children in armed conflict, as appropriate, both in mandates for and reports about such operations.

"The Security Council supports the efforts of the United Nations, regional and subregional organizations as well as Member States in the field of training for peacekeeping.

"The Security Council welcomes the readiness of the United Nations to act as a clearing house for information on available training initiatives. It particularly welcomes the intention of the Secretary-General to establish a United Nations database on training. With the aim of strengthening Africa's peacekeeping capacity, the Security Council requests the Secretary-General to pursue these plans, and to include in the database information about African needs in this field, possible regional and extra-regional contributions to assist in achieving this goal, and available expertise on training. It encourages Member States and regional and subregional organizations to contribute information to the database. It encourages the Secretary-General to consider possible further uses and broadening of United Nations databases, for instance in humanitarian crises.

"The Security Council also welcomes the proposal of the Secretary-General to establish an informal working group composed of African and non-African States directly involved or interested in the provision of training assistance.

"The Security Council emphasizes the value of training aimed at improving coordination and cooperation among military, police, humanitarian and other civilian components of peacekeeping operations. It encourages the Secretary-General and Member States to engage international and non-governmental humanitarian organizations, as appropriate, in peacekeeping training activities.

"The Security Council underlines the importance of the availability of appropriately trained personnel and relevant equipment for all components of peacekeeping operations. In this context, it encourages increased

participation by Member States, in particular from Africa, in the United Nations standby arrangements. The Council further encourages the use of United Nations Training Assistance Teams as a useful tool in support of national peacekeeping training. It recognizes the value of joint training exercises, as well as the establishment of partnerships between States whose contingents require equipment and States and organizations that are able to assist them. It also encourages the exchange of lessons learned from previous operations.

"The Security Council requests the Secretary-General to study ways to improve the availability of logistics for peacekeeping efforts in Africa.

"The Security Council stresses the need for it to be fully informed of peacekeeping activities carried out or planned by regional or subregional organizations and underlines that the improved flow of information and the holding of regular briefing meetings between members of the Council, African regional and subregional organizations involved in peacekeeping operations and troop contributors and other participating Member States have an important role to play in helping enhance African peacekeeping capacity. In that context, the Council encourages the Secretary-General to establish appropriate United Nations liaison with regional and subregional organizations and invites those organizations and Member States to provide the Security Council and the Secretary-General with information on their activities in the field of peacekeeping."

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